

A COORDINATED PLANNING PROCESS PROPOSAL FOR CLERMONT COUNTY

About Comprehensive Planning

A Comprehensive Plan lays out a community's vision and goals for the future. It outlines development policies; serves as a blueprint for development; provides a process through which to address development goals in a proactive, coordinated manner; and identifies agencies and organizations to help in achieving goals. A comprehensive plan can include as many elements as necessary. Below is a list of the core elements of a Comprehensive Plan: (Items in bold are completed plans)

Core Comprehensive Plan Elements

- Land Use
- **Economic Development**
- **Transportation**
- **Public Facilities/Infrastructure**
- **Housing**
- Natural Resources
- Intergovernmental Cooperation
- Capital Improvements

Other Possible Plan Elements

- Public Safety
- **Disaster Management**
- Tourism Development
- Recreation
- Healthcare
- **Storm Water Management**
- **Reduction of Non-Point Source Pollution**
- Etc.

Currently, plans and decision-making that affect many of these elements, referred to generically as "Master Plans", are being conducted independently with only a limited level of outside project collaboration and information sharing. This territorial approach can and has resulted in the adoption of conflicting strategies and, in some cases, significant additional project costs. It is essential that we make the necessary changes to correct the root cause of this problem.

Making the Necessary Changes

Our immediate goal is to create and put into motion a *Coordinated Planning Process* that can be duplicated by the various county departments as they produce their own Master Plans, which then come together as multiple elements of a Comprehensive Plan. The Comprehensive Plan could be thought of as a three ring binder into which the Master Plans are inserted as they are finalized. As these Master Plans are revised the updated plans will replace the old. The Comprehensive Plan, then, is never static or outdated with respect to the thinking and needs of Clermont County.

***The key to effective project coordination
is managing the flow of information.***

The current planning process is a top-down business model that calls for project information to come from senior management. From the grandest master plan, to minute details about a bid package, information must be conveyed through the Department Heads in order to reach other departments. Likewise, a Department Head must personally capture all of this information and ensure that his or her department properly analyzes and makes use of it. With the myriad complexity of all of the County's business, the task on the shoulders of each Department Head is more than one person can handle. The result is predictably, lost information, failed communication, missed opportunities, and inefficient use of resources.

Rethinking How Information Flows

The conceptual solution seems to be as simple as unburdening the Department Heads and finding more efficient conveyors of day-to-day information while ensuring all information, large and small, gets to where it needs to go. "Seems" simple and "is" simple are two very different things. Focusing our efforts on better managing the flow of information, we propose an alternative approach to information sharing with regards to planning be used.

An Alternative Approach

We propose the following measures to ensure that information is handled properly and efficiently:

- Master Plans should involve all applicable departments at several stages of development. For example, if the County Engineer is developing a Master Plan for Transportation Infrastructure, the Sewer & Water Department, Planning Department, OEQ, OED, Local governments, etc. should be involved in the discussion several times during the formulation of the plan.
- Draft Comprehensive Plans must be approved or commented on by all Department Heads prior to Public Hearing and Adoption as a "catch all" opportunity for internal input to the plan. A time limit for comment will be decided upon to avoid excessively delaying the plan adoption whereas, no comment received within the time limit will be perceived as tacit approval.
- Strategic Plans, (which serve to put the broad concepts and initiatives of a Master Plan into action) and CIP's should relate to an adopted Master Plan.

However, special circumstances or immediate needs may necessitate quick action on a project not anticipated in a Master Plan. **No work should commence without a Strategic Plan.**

- Strategic Plans are to be developed by "Strategy Teams" composed of staff from all intimately involved Departments. Instead of all details of a Strategy Plan going through the Department Heads, the Heads of those Departments intimately involved will assign staff members to work on a team to produce the Strategy Plan and will be only periodically updated on the plan's progress as necessary.
- Like Master Plans, Strategic Plans and CIP's require approval or comment by all Department Heads before adoption.
- The Planning Department will maintain a page on its website which provides links to the full text of all current plans adopted by the County and Local Governments. This page will also provide an up to date list of all plans currently in the works.
- GIS staff will create and maintain a folder which will contain the layer files of all maps published in every current plan by the County and Local Governments. These layer files will provide an invaluable reference in coordinating future plans and work with previous plans.
- Notification Checklists will be developed that will accompany any proposal submitted before the BCC or Planning Commission. These checklists will serve as a final "catch all" to ensure the proper departments and affiliated organizations have seen such proposal before official action takes place. Each department will be responsible for developing the checklists to accompany their business before the BCC. For instance, the Building Department will develop a checklist for subdivision review cases before the Planning Commission. Other departments will then have an opportunity to see all the checklists and express their desire to be included on the ones that they wish.

Project Oversight

Coordinated planning process oversight for each Master Plan will rest on the Department or Departments in charge of producing that particular Master Plan. If invited to do so, the Department of Community Planning & Development would assist in administering the planning process, but sole guidance of the content of the plan should remain in the hands of the principally concerned Department.

ASSEMBLING THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN ELEMENTS

Applying the Coordinated Planning Process

A major point in the preceding section is that when Master Plans are assembled as elements of a Comprehensive Plan, the one characteristic they will share, the one thing that will bind them together will be a common coordinated planning process. This process will assure that these elements will not contradict each other, and that collaboration between all interested Departments has occurred. The scope of these Master Plans should be comprehensive in addressing their intended topic and achieve a range of vision of 25 to 30 years.

Prioritizing the Development of Plan Elements

Because they represent the fundamental services that the County must supply to its citizens, the Core Comprehensive Plan Elements listed before should be given priority in development. However, because these individual elements, or Master Plans, will continue to be developed by different Departments, it will remain possible for several planning efforts to run concurrently. Therefore, development of a Master Plan not on the Core list should not be discouraged.

How Can Existing Plans Become Part of the Comprehensive Plan?

As mentioned earlier, many of the County's existing did not take full advantage of collaboration with other Departments. This has led to inconsistencies among these plans that should be rectified before being inserted into the framework of the Comprehensive Plan.

This could be accomplished by holding a meeting to address each plan and hold a discussion about impacts on other Departments and plans. The resulting conciliations will be recorded as an addendum to the plan.

Prioritizing Comprehensive Plan Elements and Objectives

Quite simply, there should not be any mechanism to conscientiously prioritize objectives or elements within the Comprehensive Plan. This will naturally occur as the popular and political winds shift to react to current needs within the County. The better individual plan elements anticipate and address these needs, the more likely that priority (and funding) will be placed there.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF COMPREHENSIVE PLAN ELEMENTS

Applying the Coordinated Planning Process

Now that we have addressed how the various Comprehensive Plan elements will be assembled, we should now define the coordinated planning process that will bind them. Our proposed ten-step Coordinated Planning Process is as follows:

1. Define Goals (can be refined throughout process)
2. Meet individually with Departments and outside entities in order to expose key issues and identify those Departments who will be integral voices in Plan development.
3. Define Issues
4. Draft Proposed Strategy Solutions
5. Hold a meeting for each issue to discuss feasibility of draft proposed Strategy Solutions
6. Modify Strategy Solutions per meeting comments
7. Assemble Stakeholder Group to comment on Strategy Solutions
8. Modify Strategy Solutions per Stakeholder comment
9. Draft Master Plan to be commented on by all Department Heads
10. Public Hearing and Adoption

Role of Strategic Plans

Strategic Plans are meant to provide a focused look at a specific issue or location while adding a level of logistical detail not possible in a Master Plan. These Strategic Plans should fall directly out of generalized Strategy Solutions proposed during the Coordinated Planning Process above.

Updating Comprehensive Plan Elements

Comprehensive Plan Elements, or Master Plans should be re-evaluated every five years to ensure that they continue to reflect current situations. Most likely, updates will be limited to the addition of an issue or two, but could be as extensive as a complete rewrite. However, small or large the changes, the above Coordinated Planning Process should be followed.

A COORDINATED LAND USE PLAN FOR CLERMONT COUNTY

Land Use Plan Goals

The goals for this Land Use Plan are a bit different than what would be expected. The focus of these goals are not as much about which land use issues to deal with or land use changes to promote, but rather, the focus is on working through and refining a collaborative planning process. Then, this process can be used as a template method for future planning endeavors.

Land Use Plan Goals

- Bring County Departments together to Better Coordinate Efforts of the County
- Improve coordination and information exchange between the local jurisdictions and the County
- Promote and Aid local planning efforts

Issue Identification

Within each of the twenty-one planning studies, strategies, recommendations and plans conducted for local and county governments in Clermont County over the past ten years, a section on issues or needs can be found.

A Basis for Countywide Issue Identification

County Plans

- Thoroughfare Plan Update - 2006
- Wadely-Donovan Economic Assessment of Clermont County - 2006
- Office & Industrial Absorption & Development Market Trends - 2005
- Office & Industrial Development Market Study Trends - 2005
- Sewer & Water Master Plan Update - 2004
- OSU Extension Service Community Needs Profile - 2005
- All Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan - 2004
- Reduction of Non-Point Source Pollution from On-site Systems
- Solid Waste Plan Update - Draft Stage
- Clermont County Storm Water Management Plan - 2003
- Community Housing Improvement Strategies - 2002
- State Route 32 Corridor Vision Plan - 1998
- Market Analysis for State Route 32 Vision Plan - 1999

Local Plans

- Miami Township Comprehensive Land Use Plan - 2005
- Batavia Township Growth Management Plan - 2004
- Goshen Township Growth Management Plan - 2004
- Land Use Plan for Williamsburg Township - 2004
- Jackson Township Land Use Plan - 2003
- Union Township Land Use Vision Plan 20/20
- Loveland Historic Business District Revitalization Plan
- Wayne Township Growth Management Plan - 2003
- Tate Township SR 125 Land Use Plan - 1995

Issues for Consideration

In order to quickly assess the key land use issues and to simultaneously jumpstart the collaborative process, the Community Planning Department interviewed many other County Departments and Target Agencies about their unique perspective on land use issues. An analysis of opinions put forth during these interviews reveals six dominant countywide issue categories.

Countywide Issues

- Economic Development Infrastructure Needs - Aggressive program efforts are needed to establish sanitary sewer lines and extend roadway segments is needed to create new business and industrial site opportunities, particularly within the SR 32 Corridor.
- Land Use Conflicts - A serious need exists for a county land use vision and development plan that encourages better coordination between local governments to remedy existing and avoid future land use conflicts.
- Population Growth Impacts - Programs are needed to address storm water runoff, increased traffic, sewer service capacity and residential land consumption issues associated with rapidly increasing population and housing unit numbers.
- Balance in Land Use Development - An effort is needed to balance residential, service, retail and industrial land uses development initiatives to balance tax base and reduce the taxpayer burden to fund public facilities and infrastructure.

- Rural Character - Rural township officials and residents have expressed the need for land use strategies that will accommodate inevitable growth while preserving their community's rural character.
- Maximizing the Benefit of Open Space - Land banking through the County Parks District should be explored to maximize public benefit from dedicated open space land created during the subdivision process.

Task Assignments and Oversight

With the six issue categories identified, the Community Planning Department will conduct an Issue Meeting for each to identify possible strategy solutions. From there, department heads will assign appropriate staff members to create Strategy Teams to refine each proposed strategy solutions. Each Strategy Team will have all access to all information pertinent to their assigned task as outlined in the Coordinated Planning Process.

Local Government and Public Involvement

To be successful, there must be a shared ownership in the County's land use strategies between and among local governments, county departments, the business community and community residents. The public review and comment of the proposed countywide land use plan is an important element of the planning process. In addition to a public presentation to be held in the Fall, complete copies of plan recommendation materials will be provided to local officials and will be posted on the Planning Department's web site.

Adopting the Comprehensive Plan

Once the public review process has been completed and comments have been summarized, the Planning Department staff will finalize the land use plan and submit it according to the Coordinated Planning Process. The Land Use Element of the Clermont County Comprehensive Plan will then be submitted to the County's Planning Commission for their adoption and forwarded to the Board of County Commissioners for further action.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS MEETING SCHEDULE

<p><u>NORTHWEST PLANNING DISTRICT</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Goshen Township • Miami Township • City of Loveland • City of Milford <p>Wednesday August 16 @ 9:30 a.m. Miami Township Government Center 5900 McPicken Drive Miami Township</p>	<p><u>SOUTHERN PLANNING DISTRICT</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Village of Felicity • Franklin Township • Village of Moscow • Village of New Richmond • Ohio Township • Monroe Township • Washington Township <p>Thursday September 7 @ 5:30 p.m. Monroe Township Hall 2828 State Route 222 Monroe Township</p>
<p><u>NORTHEAST PLANNING DISTRICT</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jackson Township • Stonelick Township • Wayne Township • Village of Newtonsville • Village of Owensville <p>Wednesday August 23 @ 5:30 p.m. Jackson Township Community Center 3263 US 50 Jackson Township</p>	<p><u>EAST CENTRAL PLANNING DISTRICT</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Village of Bethel • Tate Township • Village of Williamsburg • Williamsburg Township <p>Tuesday September 12 @ 5:30 p.m. Williamsburg Township Center 4025 Alexander Lane Williamsburg Township</p>
<p><u>WEST CENTRAL PLANNING DISTRICT</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Village of Amelia • Village of Batavia • Batavia Township • Pierce Township • Union Township <p>Wednesday August 30 @ 9:00 a.m. Batavia Township Hall 1535 Clough Pike Batavia Township</p>	